[25th September 1956

Death due to drinking of intoxicating essence

* 222 Q.—SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP : Will the Hon. the Minister for Finance be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether any death occurred in or outside Palghat hospital early in June 1956 due to drinking of intoxicating essence; and

(*b*) if so, whether any enquiry was conducted into the incident and with what result?

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM : (*a*) Yes, Sir.

(*b*) The offender has been charged and the case is *sub judice*.

SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP : How many, according to the result of the enquiry made by the Government, died in the incident?

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM : Nine of the persons died within 12 to 36 hours of the consumption of the stuff, while three others are in hospital stricken by paralysis.

SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP : Did the Government enquire as to what the poisonous drink was and how it came to be sold in the market?

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM : I have got a report with me. But it makes reference to the accused. I do not think it will be advisable to say what happened there, as it will amount to an expression of opinion here on a matter which is *sub judice*.

SRI S. DAIVASIGAMONEY : Sir, the first question relates to the number of deaths due to the drinking of intoxicating essence. The next question is whether any enquiry has been made as to wherefrom this essence was bought by the deceased persons.

10 a.m. THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM : An enquiry has been made and a charge-sheet against the seller has been laid before the magistrate.

SRI K. KUNHI MOHAMED SHAFEE : How did the in-patients or out-patients of the hospital get this essence? May I know, Sir, whether the essence was illicitly manufactured anywhere near Palghat or imported from outside?

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM : There is no question of any patients in the hospital getting this drink. The men took the drink, and as a result of this nine died and three were admitted into the hospital and treated as in-patients. As regards the question wherefrom this stuff was brought in, I should think, evidently, it was imported from outside.